

Message Text

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13
ORIGIN DHA-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 ORM-02 VO-03 SCA-01 INSE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 SY-05 DEAE-00 /034 R

DRAFTED BY D/HA/ORM:HBCUSHING:CML
APPROVED BY D/HA - JMWILSON
D/HA/ORM - SCLOWMAN
EA/TB - RASMITH

----- 067589

P 291819Z SEP 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY
INFO AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI PRIORITY
AMCONSUL UDORN
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 242058

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, TH, LA

SUBJECT: REFUGEE CAMPS: A SOLUTION FOR FUTURE YEARS?

REF: CHIANG MAI 311 (NOTAL)

1. DEPT. APPRECIATES CONTINUING ASSESSMENT OF REFUGEE SITUATION, ATTITUDES OF LOCAL THAIS AND CAMP POPULATION, AND IMPLICATIONS OF CONTINUED EXODUS FROM LAOS. IN THIS CONTEXT, IT WILL BE USEFUL FOR EMBASSY TO KNOW THAT WE HAVE CLEARLY INDICATED TO UNHCR OUR UNWILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE SUPPORT MAINTENANCE OF REFUGEE CAMPS INDEFINITELY. THE UNHCR POSITION IS ONE WITH OURS, AND DEPUTY HCR MACE, IN RECENT MEETING WITH D/HA COORDINATOR WILSON, REPORTED THAT RTG NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL HAS APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE (BUT NOT OBVIOUSLY YET PUBLICIZED) THE POLICY TO BEGIN RESETTLEMENT PROJECTS AFTER OCTOBER 77, BASED ON SELF SUFFICIENCY EFFORTS IN THE OCT 76-SEPT 77 PERIOD. THE

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CABINET HAS NOT YET APPROVED THIS POLICY, BUT WE HOPE

DECISION WILL BE FAVORABLE AND BELIEVE RTG SHOULD UNDER-
STAND OUR UNWILLINGNESS PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OVER
LONG HAUL FOR PLAN INVOLVING MAINTENANCE ONLY.

2. THERE ARE OTHER CONCEIVABLE SCENARIOS, OF COURSE, IN-
CLUDING VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION, DEPENDING ON DEVELOPMENTS

IN LAOS. THIS IS UNLIKELY, HOWEVER, TO BE MORE THAN A
PAPER PROPOSAL PRIMARILY DESIGNED TO MAKE THE LOCAL RE-
SETTLEMENT PROJECT MORE DIGESTIBLE. THE NSC DECISION
WOULD APPEAR TO CONFIRM THAT THE RTG SO READS THE MAT-
TER.

3. MACE LEFT WITH D/HA COPY OF INFORMAL INTERNAL UNHCR
DOCUMENT PREPARED BY JAEGER REFLECTING RESULTS OF UNHCR
REPS MEETING EARLIER THIS MONTH IN BANGKOK WHICH CLEARLY
SUPPORTS PRINCIPLE THAT SELF SUFFICIENCY MUST BE ULTIMATE
GOAL. (COPY BEING POUCHED EMBASSY). FURTHER VIEW
EXPRESSED THEREIN THAT THERE REMAIN SEVERAL UNKNOWNNS IN
PRESENT EQUATION AND APPEAL FOR NEW PROGRAM IF LAUNCHED
PREMATURELY WOULD NOT ATTRACT DONORS AND WOULD NOT BE
CONSISTENT WITH UNHCR PRESSURE ON RTG FOR REALISTIC
MOVES TO SOLVE PROBLEM.

4. UNHCR ACCORDINGLY DOES NOT PLAN TO INITIATE APPEAL
FOR NEW THAI PROGRAM TILL EARLY 1977. IN DEPT.'S VIEW
RTG DECISION TO GO INTO RESETTLEMENT PHASE EARLIER MIGHT
ACCELERATE FORMULATION OF UNHCR/RTG PROGRAM. WILSON
PLANS TO EXPLORE THIS FURTHER WITH UNHCR IN GENEVA NEXT
WEEK. ANY FURTHER VIEWS EMBASSY MAY WISH TO CONTRIBUTE
PRIOR TO THAT TIME WOULD BE MOST WELCOME. ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT, POLICIES, REFUGEE CAMPS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE242058
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: HBCUSHING:CML
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760368-0279
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976096/aaaaaeup.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN DHA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 CHIANG MAI 311
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 MAY 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <09 SEP 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REFUGEE CAMPS: A SOLUTION FOR FUTURE YEARS?
TAGS: SREF, TH, LA, US, UNHCR
To: BANGKOK
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006